(iv) The lane leading from the Quilon Residency road a little to the west of Kadapalkada and from the western end of Vayal veedu in Asramom to the northern most extremity of Uliakoil backwater might be converted into a cartable road to provide facilities for carting manure and agricultural produce. The site had already been inspected by the Dewan in company with the Peishkar, but nothing had been done as yet. He therefore requested that orders might be issued for the speedy construction of the road.

In conclusion, the Member suggested that the construction and maintenance of the above roads might be entrusted to responsible persons of the locality, instead of to the P. W. D., with a subsidy from Government.

Dewan's reply.—Government are thankful to the Member for his suggestions which will be looked into.

48. Agricultural needs of the Mavelikara taluk.

Mr. N. G. Parameswaran Pillai (Member, Mavelikara Taluk) prefaced his representation with a few remarks on agriculture in general and offered suggestions for its improvement. The following were his suggestions :—

(i) That scientific knowledge in agriculture should be imparted to the people. Towards attaining that object, the Member suggested that, besides the teaching of the elementary principles of agriculture in the vernacular schools, purely agricultural schools should be opened at all convenient centres for imparting instruction in relation to the higher principles and practical lessons in agriculture, with demonstration farms attached thereto and placed under the supervision of the Director of Agriculture.

(ii) That scientific methods of cultivation should be popularised,

(*a*) by the opening of experimental farms in every taluk under the supervision of Inspectors ;

(*b*) by demonstrating to the ryots the advantages of seed selection, improved tools and appliances, the system of intensive cultivation and cattle breeding on the lines adopted by the department, and

(*c*) by the holding of agricultural exhibitions in different parts of the State.

(iii) That the extent of land under paddy cultivation should be increased by propogandist work as was being done in the case of the uncultivated areas commanded by the Kodayar project. There was much scope for such propoganda, as vast areas suitable for paddy cultivation were available in Central Travancore and in the forests, backwaters, &c. of the State. To make the State self-supporting in the matter of paddy required for consumption, it was necessary that care should be taken not to register away waste lands and porambokes in the names of foreigners.

(iv) That necessary facilities should be provided for cultivation. In reference particularly to Central Travancore, the Member said that there were no facilities for irrigation and drainage; that there was a net work of canals and channels useful for the purpose but that, for want of maintenance, they were silted up or were encroached upon by the adjacent land-owners. Effective steps should be taken to restore their *status quo ante.*

The Member then proceeded to enumerate the needs of Mavelikara. There were 30,000 paras of punja lands in the Nuranad pakuthi, locally known as Karim gali chal. The chal was surrounded on three sides by hills and on one side by the Kulakada river. The land level was lower than the river bed. As such, sowing commenced in Kumbham and harvest in Edavom, when the monsoon invariably set in and the whole crop was destroyed by the action of the flood. The Member, therefore, suggested that the post of an Agricultural Engineer should be created to inspect such uncultivable areas and suggest measures to convert them into profitable paddy growing areas. As repeated representations made at the Assembly on the matter

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had been so far futile, he requested a sympathetic consideration. Another need of the ryots of Mavelikara was the improvement of the canal leading from the Kulakada river to the Tazhakara punja fields. That channel formerly used for irrigation and commercial purposes had become silted up. The length of the channel was only 1½ miles and the cost of improving it might not exceed Rs. 3,000. Another important need of the place was a manure depot in a convenient locality near the Mavelikara Arattukadavu.

Dewan's reply.—Dr. Kunjen Pillai tells me that a private person has undertaken to open a manure depot on the agency system. It is much easier to start private depots by giving a certain amount as commission. In that way we can establish more depots. As regards the other points some of them are very important. I intend visiting Mavelikara and acquainting myself with the conditions of the locality. I shall consider these points after my inspection.

49. Need for establishing a Veterinary Hospital at Punalur.

Mr. Kanakku Padmanabhon Narayanan (Member, Pattanapuram Taluk) stated that, in reply to his representation on the same subject at the 16th session of the Assembly, he was told that it would be referred to the Director of Agriculture for an expression of his views. As the result of that reference, the Director of Agriculture recommended the opening of a Veterinary hospital at Shencottah and his recommendation was sanctioned by Government. The Member said that several heads of cattle were being imported from the British Districts *via* Punalur and that the establishment of a Veterinary hospital at that place, as suggested by him, would greatly tend to arrest the spread of any epedemic disease from which such cattle might happen to suffer. He doubted whether a hospital at Shencottah could possibly serve the end in view and suggested that, if a new hospital could not be opened, the existing one at Quilon might be shifted to Punalur.

Dewan's reply.—I shall come to Punalur soon, and I shall see the place and then consider the question. As regards the opening of the Veterinary hospital at Shencottah, it was thought that as it is a frontier town and as the cattle pass through that place into the State, the diseased cattle could be treated there before they come into Travancore. It was with that object that orders were passed to open a hospital at Shencottah. But the hospital itself has not yet been opened. After visiting Punalur I shall dispose of the question.

50. The Punja system of cultivation, its disadvantages and the necessity for a change in the attitude of Government towards the Punja ryots.

Mr. P. K. Narayana Aiyar (Member, Ambalapuzha taluk) represented that there were extensive tracts of tax-paying punja lands in Kuttanad and other places in the State; and that, though much revenue was being derived from them, the Government had been so far extending only a step-motherly attention towards punja cultivators as distinguished from nanja cultivators for whose benefit large sums had been spent in the past on such irrigation works as the Kodayar project, &c. Punja lands formed an important asset and, if they could be made cultivable annually instead of biennially as now, the necessity for the import of foreign paddy for consumption was bound to cease. These water-logged lands lay submerged in water and as such no ploughing worth mentioning was done on such lands. In cultivating these lands ring-bunds had to be put up and water from the fields pumped out at the joint expense of the cultivators who in many cases owned a continuous belt of land in small plots. For want of sufficient co-operation among the ryots, it had been found difficult either to put up bunds in time or to recover the proportionate cost of putting up such bunds and pumping out water, from the individual owners. In many cases, the bunds put up were not sufficiently strong for want of shrub and grass necessary for their construction. Punja lands depended for their manure on the silt brought down by rivers and canals, but those had now been blocked up by mud or had been encroached upon by the adjoining land-owners. Artificial manures were, if at all, rarely

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